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Thro' many a street and many a town,
The ink man shapes his way ;
The trusty ass keeps plodding on,
His master to obey.

Turn again *Whurlington*,
Lore Mayor of Great LONDON.



Sir *Richard Wittington* behold,
In Chariot fine, with chain of Gold.

25
set
178

THE
HISTORY
OF
WHITTINGTON
AND HIS CAT.

S H E W I N G,
How from a poor Country Boy, destitute of Parents or Relations, he attained great Riches, and was promoted to the high and honourable dignity of *Lord Mayor of London.*

Adorned with CUTS.

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SKRBRAD

The HISTORY of WHITTINGTON & his CAT.

DICK WHITTINGTON was a very little boy when his father and mother died ; so little indeed, that he neither knew them, nor the place where he was born. He strolled about the country as ragged as a colt, till he met a Waggoner who was going to London,



and he gave him leave to walk all the way by the side of his waggon without paying any thing for his passage, which obliged little Whittington very much, as he wanted to see London sadly; for he had heard that the streets were paved with gold, and he was willing to get a bushel of it. But, how great was his disappointment, poor boy, when he saw the streets covered with dirt instead of gold, and found himself in a strange place, without food, without friends, and without money,

Though the waggoner was so charitable as to let him walk up by the side of his waggon for nothing, he took care not to know him when he came to town, and the poor boy was in a little time so cold and hungry, that he wished himself in a good kitchen, and by a warm fire in the country, In this di-

strefs he asked charity of several people, and one of them bid him, *Go to work for an idle Rogue.*

That I will says Whittington, with all my heart. I will work for you, if you will let me. The man, who thought this favoured of wit and impertinence (tho' the poor lad intended only to shew his readiness of work) gave him a blow with a stick, which broke his head, so that the blood ran down. In this situation and fainting for want of food, he laid himself down at the door of one Mr. Fitzwarren, a merchant, where the cook saw him, and being an ill-natured hussey, ordered him to go about his business or she would scald him. At this time Mr. Fitzwarr n came from the Exchange, and began also to scold at the poor boy, bidding him go to work.



Whittington answered, that he should be glad to work, if any body would employ him, and that he should be able, if he could get some victuals to eat ; but he had got none for three days, and he was a poor count ry by and knew nobody and nobody wou'd employ him. He then endeavoured to get up, but was so very weak that he fell down again, which excited so much compassion in the merchant

chant, that he ordered the servants to take him in, and give him some meat and drink, and let him help the cook to do any dirty work that she had to set him about. People are too apt to reproach those who beg with being idle ; but give themselves no concern to put them in a way of getting business to do, or considering whether they are able to do it.

I remember a circumstance of this sort, which Sir William Thomson told my father with tears in his eyes, and it is so affecting, that I shall never forget it.

When Sir William was in the plantations abroad, one of his friends told him he had an indented servant, whom he had just bought, that was his countryman, and a lusty man, but he is so idle says he, that I cannot get him to work. Ay ; says Sir William, let me see him ; they

walked out together and found him sitting on a heap of stones, Upon this Sir William, after enquiring about his country, asked, why he did not go out to work ! I am not able, answered the man, Not able, says Sir William, I am sure you look very well ; give him a few stripes. Upon this the planter struck him several times ; but the poor man still kept his seat,

They then left him, to look over the plantation, exclaiming against his obstinacy all the way they went.

But how surprized were they on their return, to find the poor man fallen off the place where he had been sitting and dead. The cruelty, says Sir William, of my ordering the poor creature to be beaten while in the agonies of death. lies always next my heart. It is what I shall never forget, and it will for ever pre-

vent my judging rashly of people who appear in distress. How do we know what our own children may come to! The Lord have mercy on the poor and defend them from the proud, the inconsiderate, and the avaricious.

But we return to Whittington: he would have lived happily in this worthy Family had he not been bumped about by the cross Cook, who must be always



roasting and basting, and when the Spit was still she employed her hands upon poor Whittington: till Mrs. *Alice*, his Master's Daughter was informed of it, and then she took compassion on the poor Boy and made the servants treat him kindly.

Besides the crossness of the Cook, Whittington had another difficulty to get over before he could be happy. He had by order of his master, a flock bed placed for him, in the garret, where there were such a number of rats and mice, that they often ran over the poor boy's nose, and disturbed him in his sleep.

After some time, however, a gentleman, who came to his master's house, gave Whittington a penny for brushing his shoes. This he put in his pocket, being determined to lay it out to the best advantage, and the next day seeing a

woman in the street with a Cat under her arm, he ran up to her to know the price of it. The woman, as the cat was a good mouser, asked a great deal of money for it, but on Whittington's telling her he had but a penny in the world, and that he wanted a Cat sadly, she let him have it.

This Cat Whittington concealed in the garret, for fear she should be beat about by his mortal enemy the cook, and here she soon killed or frightened away the rats and mice, so that the poor boy could now sleep as sound as a top.

Soon after this the merchant, who had a ship ready to sail, called for all his servants, as his custom was, in order that each of them might venture something to try their luck, and whatever they sent was to pay neither fright nor
cus_

custom ; for he thought, (and he thought justly,) that God almighty would bless him the more for his readiness to let the poor partake of his good fortune.

All the servants appeared but poor Whittington, who having neither money nor goods, could not think of sending any thing to try his luck, but his good friend Mrs. *Alice*, thinking his poverty kept him away, ordered him to be called. She then offered to lay down something for him ; but the merchant told his daughter that would not do ; for it must be something of his own. Upon which poor Whittington, said, he had nothing but a Cat, which he had bought for a penny that was given him. Fetch thy Cat boy, says the merchant, and send her. Whittington brought poor puss and delivered her to the captain with tears



tears in his eyes, for he said, he should now be disturbed by the rats and the mice as much as ever. All the company laughed at the oddity of the adventure, and Mrs. Alice, who pitied the poor boy, gave him something to buy him another Cat.

While puss was beating the billows at sea, poor Whittington was severely beaten at home by his tyrannical mistress the cook, who used him so cruelly, and made such game of him for sending his
Cat

Cat to sea, that at last the poor boy determined to run away from his place, and having packed up a few things he had, he set out very early in the morning on All-hallows day. He travelled as far as Holloway, and there sat down on a stone, now called Whittington's stone, to consider what course to take: but while he was thus ruminating, Bow bells, of which there was then only six, began to ring: and as he thought addressed him in this manner:

Turn again Whittington,
Lord Mayor of great London.

Lord Mayor of London, said he to himself, what would one not endure to be Lord Mayor of London, and ride in such a fine coach! Well, I'll go back again, and bear all the pummeling and ill usage of Cicely, rather than miss the opportunity of being Lord Mayor. So
home

home he went, and happily got into the house and about his business, before Mrs. Cicely made her appearance.

Here we stop a little to address the children of six feet high, and among them those formidable heroes the critics, whose awful brows strike terror into the hearts of us little authors.

Be it known then, to these gentlemen and to all the knights of the goose quill, that we are not insensible of the precepts of Apollo, or ignorant of the laws of the drama.

We know that the unities of action, time and place, should be preserved as well in the drama of Whittington, as in those of Cæsar or Alexander; but by your permission, gentlemen we must, in imitation of some of our poets, just step abroad while you sit upon the bench, to let

let you know what has happened to the poor Cat, however we are going no farther than the coast of Africa, to that coast where Dido expired for the loss of Æneas, and we shall be back with you presently. How perilous are voyages at sea! how uncertain the winds and the waves, and how many accidents attend a naval life!

The ship with the cat on board, was long beating about at sea, and at last by contrary winds, driven on a part of the coast of Barbary, which was inhabited by the moors unknown to the English. These people received our countryman with civility, and therefore the captain in order to trade with them, shewed them patterns of the goods he had on board, and sent some of them to the king of the country, who was so well pleased, that he

he sent for the captain and the factor to his palace, which was about a mile from the sea. Here they were placed according to the custom of the country on rich carpets flowered with gold and silver : and the king and queen being seated at upper end of the room, dinner was brought in, which consisted of many dishes, but no sooner were the dishes put down, but an amazing number of rats and mice came from all quarters and devoured all the meat in an instant. The factor in surprize turned round to the nobles, and asked if these vermin were not offensive ! *Oh yes*, said they, very offensive ; and the king would give half his treasure to be free of them, for they not only destroy his dinner as you see, but they assault him in his chamber, and even in his bed, so that he is obliged to be watched while is sleeping for fear of them.

The factor jumped for joy, he remembered poor Whittington and his Cat, and told the king he had a creature on board the ship that would dispatch all these vermin immediately. The king's heart heaved so high, at the joy which this news gave him, that his turban dropped off his head. Bring this creature to me, says he, vermin are dreadful in a court, and if she will perform what you say, I will load your ship with gold and jewels in exchange for her. The factor, who knew his business, took this opportunity to set forth the merits of Mrs. Puss. He told his majesty that it would be inconvenient for him to part with her, as when she was gone the rats and mice might destroy the goods in his ship, but that to oblige his majesty he would fetch her. Run, run, said the queen, I am impatient to see the dear creature. A-way

way flew the factor, while another dinner was providing, and returned with the Cat, just as the rats and mice were devouring that also. He immediately



put down Mrs. Puss, who killed great part of them, and the rest ran away. The king rejoiced greatly to see his old enemies destroyed by so small a creature, and the queen was highly pleased, and de-

desired the Cat might be brought near, that she might look at her. Upon which the factor called *Pussy, pussy, pussy*, and she came to him ; he then presented her to the queen, who started back, and was afraid to touch a creature which had made such a havock among the rats and mice ; however when the factor stroaked the Cat, and cried *Pussy, pussy, pussy*, the queen also touched her, and cried *Puttey, puttey, puttey*, for she had not learned English. He then put her down in the queen's lap, where she purring, played with her majesty's hand, and then sung herself to sleep. The king having seen the exploits of Mts. Puss, and being informed that she was with young, and would flock the whole country, bargained with the captain and factor for the whole ship's cargo, and then gave them

them ten times as much for the Cat as all the rest amounted to. With which, after taking leave of their majesties, they sailed with a fair wind for England, whither we must now attend them.

The morn ensuing from the mountains height,

Had scarcely spread the skies with rosy light;

when Mr. Fitzwarren stole from bed to count over the cash and settle the business of the day. He had just entered the compting-house, and seated himself when somebody came, tap tap, at the door.

Who's there? says Mr. Fitzwarren. A friend, answered the other. What friend can come at this unseasonable time? says Mr. Fitzwarren. A real friend is never unseasonable answered the other. I come to bring you news of the good Ship Uni-

corp

corn. The merchant bustled up in such a hurry that he forgot his gout, and instantly opened the door, and who should be seen waiting, but the captain, and the factor, with a cabinet of jewels and bill of lading, for which the merchant lift up his eyes and thanked heaven, sending him such a prosperous voyage. They told him of the adventures of the Cat, and shewed him the cabinet of jewels, that they had brought for Mr. Whittington. Upon which he cried out with great earnestness, but not in the most poetical manner.

*Go call him and tell him of his fame,
And call him Mr. Whittington by name.*

It is not our business to animadvert upon these lines, we are not critics, but historians; it is sufficient for us, that they are the words of Mr. Fitzwarren, and tho' it is besides our purpose
and

and perhaps not in our power to prove him a good poet, we shall soon convince the reader that he was a good man, which is a much better character; for when some who were present, told him that this treasure was too much for such a poor boy as Whittington, he said, *God forbid that I should deprive him of a penny, it is all his own, and he shall have it to a farthing.* He then ordered Mr. Whittington in, who was at this time cleaning the kitchen and would have excused himself from going into the parlour, saying, the room was rubbed, and his shoes were dirty and full of hob nails. The merchant, however, made him come in, and ordered a chair to be set for him, Upon which, thinking they intended to make sport of him as had been done in the kitchen, he besought his master not to mock

mock a poor simple fellow who intended them no harm, but to let him go about his business.

The merchant taking him by the hand said, indeed, Mr. Whittington, I am in earnest with you, and sent for you to congratulate you on your great success. Your Cat has produced you more money



than I am worth in the world, and may you long enjoy it and be happy. At

At length being shewed the treasure, and convinced by them that all of it belonged to him, he fell upon his knees, and thanked the *Almighty* for his providential care of such a poor miserable creature.

He then laid all the treasure at his master's feet, who refused to take any part of it, but told him he heartily rejoiced at his prosperity, and hoped the wealth he had acquired would be a comfort to him and make him happy. He then applied to his mistress and to his good friend Mrs. Alice, who likewise refused to take any part of his money but told him, she really rejoiced at his success, and wished him all imaginable felicity. He then gratified the captain, factor, and ships' crew, for the care they had taken of his cargo, & distributed presents to all the servants of the house, not forgetting
even

even his old enemy the cook, tho' she little deserved it. After this Mr. Fitz-warren advised Mr. Whittington to send for the necessary people and dress himself like a gentleman, and made him the offer of his house to live in, till he could provide himself with a better. Now it came to pass, that when Mr. Whittington's face was washed, his hair curled, his hat cocked, and he was dressed in a rich suit of cloaths, that he turned out a genteel young fellow ; and as wealth contributes to give a man confidence, he, in a little time dropped that sheepish behaviour, which was principally occasioned by a depression of spirits, and soon grew a sprightly and a good companion, inso-much that Mrs. Alice, who had formerly seen him with an eye of compassion, now viewed him with other eyes, which per-



perhaps was occasioned, by his readiness to oblige her, and by continually making presents of such things as he thought would be agreeable.

When the father perceived they had this good liking for each other, he proposed a match between them, to which both parties most chearfully consented,
and

and the Lord Mayor in his coach, Court of Aldermen, Sheriffs, the company of Stationers and a number of eminent Merchants attended the ceremony, and were elegantly treated at an entertainment made that purpose.

History tells us, that they lived happily, and had several children, that he was Sheriff of London in the year 1340, and then Lord Mayor, that in the last Year of his mayoralty he entertained King Henry the fifth and his Queen, after his conquest of France, who, in consideration of Whittington's merit, said,

“ Never had Prince such a subject ;”

which being told Whittington at the table, replied,

“ Never had subject such a King.”

He

He constantly fed great numbers of the poor. He built a church and a college to it, with a yearly allowance for poor scholars, and near it erected an hospital. He built Newgate for criminals, and gave liberally to St. Bartholomew's hospital, and to other public charities.

R E F L E C T I O N.

This story of Whittington and his Cat, and all the misfortunes which happened to that poor boy, may be considered as a cure for despair, as it teaches us that God Almighty has always something good in store for those who endure the ills that befall them, with patience and resignation.

F I N I S

Pen-Knives or Scissars to grind.



Master Grinders enough at the Helm
you may find,
Although I am but a Journey man,
Knives, Scissars, Razors to grind!